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What Kind of Guy Is the LBJ Man?

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IF A PRESIDENT'S administration could be characterized by a single, composite, personality, Franklin D. Roosevelt's might appear as a bright, brash visionary, Eisenhower's as a graying, middle-aged businessman, Kennedy's as a witty, Ivy League intellectual.

But what type would represent Lyndon Johnson's? Most probably he would be a competent, seasoned Government executive with a battered briefcase—a comfortable, pleasant sort, less sparkling than Kennedy's man, younger than Ike's and less abrasive than FDR's.

Such stereotypes are little more than handy labels, but they do suggest the presidential preferences that each man brought to the task of appointing top executives.

President Johnson's preference is now becoming clear: more than any president in recent history, he leans toward the experienced Government executive, the career bureaucrat, the proven in-house expert.

A tip-off to Mr. Johnson's Administration is provided in an analysis of the 361 non-judicial appointments he has made since taking office. Fifty-seven per cent of these top-echelon appointees have come from within Government, mostly Federal. That is about 10 per cent more than FDR's choice, five per cent more than President Kennedy's, and 20 per cent more than President Eisenhower's, according to surveys by political scientists.

Presidential Penchants

OTHER PRESIDENTIAL penchants can be gleaned from these statistical samplings. Despite his valued consensus with business, Mr. Johnson has drawn about 15 per cent of his appointees from its ranks. (Of 180 major Eisenhower appointments, 36 per cent came from the worlds of business and finance.)

And those who believe that President Kennedy cornered the academic market may be surprised to learn that Mr. Johnson has relied on university professors to approximately the same extent. It is even said that, like his predecessor, LBJ can be accused of being a Harvard-raider, having recently hired an economist for his Council of Economic Advisers and a law professor for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

However, the Johnson preference, overwhelmingly, is for the man already in Government work. What explains it? Basically he regards public service as man's most valuable and useful work. Recently, he told an audience of young people that public service is more rewarding and useful than any other field—including the ministry.

Another factor, of course, is that he did not have to stock a completely new executive staff when he took office—having inherited one from Mr. Kennedy. He apparently valued Kennedy appointees highly because he has elevated many of them to higher jobs. In fact, he has recruited only three of the present 11 cabinet secretaries from outside the Kennedy fold, (Secretaries Fowler of Treasury, Connor of Commerce and Gardner of HEW). Three others were originally brought into Government by Mr. Kennedy and subsequently raised to the top by President Johnson (Attorney General Katzenbach, Postmaster General O'Brien and Secretary Weaver of HUD). The remaining five actually were appointed by Mr. Kennedy: Secretaries Rusk of State, McNamara of Defense, Freeman of Agriculture, Udall of Interior and Wirtz of Labor.

Broken Traditions

THERE ARE MANY similar examples in the second echelon—Under Secretary Alan S. Boyd and Assistant

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Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz in Commerce, Under Secretary Wilbur J. Cohen in Health, Education and Welfare, and Under Secretary John A. Carver Jr. in Interior, to mention a few.

Mr. Johnson has broken some long-standing appointment traditions in elevating career men. For the first time, the General Services Administration and Veterans Administration have career men at their helms (Lawson B. Knott Jr. and William J. Driver respectively). But when Mr. Johnson and HEW Secretary John W. Gardner looked into the Food and Drug Administration they found no suitable career man and went outside the FDA to name Assistant Surgeon General James L. Goddard as the new commissioner.

The President has not forgotten old political friends. To head the United States Information Agency, he sidestepped the custom of naming well-known news personalities to choose his personal ally, Leonard H. Marks, a Washington lawyer. Another Washington friend, Abe Fortas, went to the Supreme Court. A bipartisan palship of long standing was acknowledged when the President appointed the son of former Republican House Leader Charles A. Halleck to the D.C. Court of General Sessions.

Congressional opinion seems to be that Mr. Johnson's appointments are competent and enlightened, if not brilliant. "I'd have to say they are pretty good," says Rep. Bradford Morse (R-Mass.), who has kept a steady eye on how top jobs are filled. "There haven't been any real bloopers, although I think the magnetism of so many Kennedy appointments is missing."

Not All Is Rosy

NOT ALL APPOINTEES, of course, have been greeted with such agreeable acceptance, as the case of Francis N. Morrissey of Boston recalls—the only judicial nomination that wasn't confirmed. There is an undercurrent of criticism against Central Intelligence Agency Director William F. Raborn, primarily on grounds that he has no prior experience in intelligence and is said to be not the ablest administrator.

Liberals have been disgruntled with the appointment of Under Secretary of State Thomas C. Mann because of his identification with hard-line politics and a toleration of military regimes in Latin America. And there is a widespread feeling that Mr. Johnson's White House staff lacks the glitter and brains of Mr. Kennedy's.

A far broader line of criticism accuses Mr. Johnson of unnecessary delays in making appointments. Last year, Republicans attacked him for failing to fill 11 cabinet-level posts. The gaps the President closed within a week. He had known for nearly a year that Joseph Swidler would leave the Federal Power Commission by the time he named Lee C. White to replace him last week.

The office of Comptroller General was vacant for more than six months. The Atomic Energy Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. each is short a member, and the Small Business Administration has been leaderless for months. And there was loud bipartisan grumbling about leaving the new Department of Housing and Urban Development without a secretary for nearly four months.

LBJ Involvement

THE LONG DELAYS are partly to be explained by the LBJ style. He wants to be personally involved in each selection, and he wants to touch all political bases before deciding. He sees almost every top appointee before making the final choice and has called many on the telephone for initial soundings.

Although Cabinet secretaries are expected to recommend men for their own departments, no one doubts that Mr. Johnson's word is the vital one. His involvement contrasts sharply with that of Mr. Eisenhower, who let Herbert Brownell and Lucius Clay (the "Commodore Hotel Group" of 1952) virtually choose his Cabinet and then give secretaries wide latitude in naming their top aides.

The LBJ role is illustrated by the manner in which 12 top appointments were made to HEW last year. Secretary Gardner and the President's chief talent scout, Civil Service Chairman John W. Macy, each produced names inside and outside of Government. S. Douglass Cater Jr., a White House aide, also suggested names. Macy and Gardner reviewed the field almost daily, weeding out and adding new names. The near-final recommendations were "pre-tested" on the President, who would say yes, no, or maybe.

When the final selections were made, the dozen choices made up a model Johnsonian "cabinet:" Three from inside HEW, five from other Federal Government posts, two from public education and two from private careers in welfare and medicine. In contrast, President Eisenhower's initial HEW appointees were drawn almost entirely from business and the law.

Computer Reservoir

ACCORDING TO MACY, the main keeper of the Federal personnel reservoir, the President wants men of intelligence and youth (35 to 50, preferably) who share the Administration's general point of view. Party [illegible] Johnson proudly boasts that he did not know of Secretary Gardner's Republican record until five minutes before announcing him).

But political clearance is an ingrained part of the procedure. Macy usually checks a potential appointee's credentials with the Democratic National Committee. But W. Marvin Watson, a presidential aide and veteran Texas political technician, makes separate checks, particularly with local politicians. No appointment is made without a rigid FBI field check to locate past deeds or potential conflicts of interest.

Macy's computer system also plays a part in the selection process, although not to the extent often reported. "It's not a question of pushing a button and bringing out the right man," Macy tells inquirers.

In his "storage and retrieval" computer are more than 20,000 names of people who may want jobs or who may be wanted someday by the Administration. If a regulatory commission vacancy must be filled, the machine can tell who is available, his party affiliation, geographical location, and other information. With a punch of another button, Macy can tell what terms expired in 1966 (Example: 18 regulatory commission jobs are technically open this year).

But no computer will be telling Lyndon Johnson whom to appoint. The choices will be his—recruited, scrutinized, and formally announced by him so that there will be no mistake about their real master in Washington. He emphasized this by putting Macy's operation next door in the Executive Office Building, and if Cabinet officers missed the point, he spelled it out for them at a Cabinet meeting 14 months ago.

"Since the men and women (for this Administration) will directly assist you . . . they must meet your standards," he said, "but they must also pass muster as members of the Johnson Administration."